

J/10/382

DRUPAD BORGOHAIN

IN

RAJYA SABHA



**SOME QUESTIONS AND
SPEECHES DURING BUDGET
AND WINTER SESSIONS-1998**

Collection of Some Questions and Speeches made by
Drupad Borgohain in the Rajya Sabha in its Budget and
winter Session 1998.

Guwahati,

2 Feb '1998

Price Rs. 15.00 (Fifteen) Only

**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 570
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST JUNE, 1998**

**ASSISTANCE TO ASSAM FOR THE BENEFIT OF SCs, STs
AND OBCs**

570. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
be pleased to state :

(a) the assistance in terms of money sanctioned by
Government to Assam for the benefit of Scheduled Castes,
Scheduled Tribes and OBCs for last three years;

(b) Whether the assistance is given along with full details
of recipients?

**MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
& EMPOWERMENT**

SMT. MANEKA GANDHI

(a) to (c) : The details of financial assistance given to the
Government of Assam for the welfare and development of
Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are shown in the
statement attached (Annexure I). No. Assistance has been
given in respect of OBCs.

Details of financial assistance given to NGOs in the state
of Assam are shown in the statement at annexure II.

(Annexure-I) referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 570

FUNDS RELEASED TO THE STATE GOVT. OF ASSAM UNDER CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME

SCHEDULED CASTES

Sl.	No.Scheme	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	SCA to SCP to SCs	223.00	163.52	142.18
2.	Scheduled Castes Dev. Corpon.	30.74	11.92	15.37
3.	Post-Matric Scholarship for SC/ST	625.98	52.03	-
4.	Hostels for SC Girls	9.00	-	9.00
5.	Hostels for SC Boys	9.00	-	5.50
6.	Book Banks for SC/St	3.00	-	-
7.	Coaching & Allied for SC/ST	1.93	-	-
8.	Implementation of PCR & Atrocities Act	2.50	3.00	-
SCHEDULE TRIBES				
1.	Hostels for ST boys	16.00	48.00	16.00
2.	Hostels for ST girls	19.00	38.41	16.00
3.	Vocational Training Centre	64.895	82.905	37.15
4.	Research and Training	17.77	13.01	23.27
5.	SCA to TSP	1545.19	1524.71	1460.00
6.	Grant under Article 275(1)	315.00	315.00	305.00

Statement (Annexure II) referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) of Rajya Sabha unstarred question No. 570 for 1.6.98.

Statement showing the details of financial assistance extended to Non-Governmental Organisations in the State of Assam.

Sl. No.	Name of the Organisation	Grants-in-aid released during		
		95-96	96-97	97-98
(Rs. in lakhs)				

SCHEDULED CASTES

1.	Ramakrishna Mission, Silchar	-	0.83	1.64
2.	Assam Anusuchit Jati Parishad, Silchar	5.00	16.65	-

SCHEDULE TRIBES

1.	Gharmora Model Satra Hills & Plains Cultural Institution, Lakhimpur	5.72	0.69	1.88
2.	Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Silchar, Cechar	3.65	3.31	1.63
3.	Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Ulubari, Guwahati	5.72	5.09	4.03

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 71.

To be answered on the 1st June, 1998.

PROMOTION OF INDO-MYANMAR AND INDO-BANGLADESH TRADING.

71. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the steps Government have taken to promote the Indo-Myanmar and Indo-Bangladesh trading possibilities and transit routes in relation to the North-East and neighbouring countries and of the transport re-connections or new facilities that might be useful and mutually advantageous to both sides; and

(b) these steps Government have taken to implement the suggestions made in high level S.P. Shukla Commission report

to the Prime Minister on March 7, 1997 as regards trade and transit in relation to the North-East.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE)

(a)&(b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House. statement referred to in part (a) and (b) of the Rajya Sabha Starred

Question No. 71

(a) Indo-Myanmar Trade:

Under the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement signed between Government of India and Myanmar on 21.1.94, the Government have already operationalised border trade with Myanmar via Moreh in Manipur (corresponding to Tamu in Myanmar) w.e.f. 21.4.95.

The second route as envisaged in Border Trade Agreement viz. Champhai in Mizoram corresponding to Rih in Myanmar is yet to be operationalised as the Myanmar side is yet to give a positive response. In the Meantime, the Government of Mizoram has proposed to establish a border township viz. Zokhawthar near Champhai to facilitate border trade with Myanmar. This Ministry has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 2 crores for the construction of composite building in the above township to facilitate arrangements relating to border trade with Myanmar.

Various steps are being taken to strengthen the infrastructural, banking and financial arrangements for facilitating border trade at Indo-Myanmar border in consultation with RBI, UBI, Ministry of Home Affairs and State Government.

Indo-Bangladesh Trade:

For removing the infrastructure bottlenecks and facilitating the movement of goods on the Indo-Bangladesh border the following projects have been approved under the Critical Infrastructure Balance (CIB) Scheme:-

(i) Construction of bridge over river-Noubhashan;

(ii) Strengthening of Bongaon-Jhowdanga-Panchpota road and construction of truck terminus at Bongaon;

(iii) Private Railway Siding up to the proposed CWC's Warehouse at Petrapole.

A Trans-Asian Railway Project is under consideration under the Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) Project of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP). ESCAP has set up an expert working group to study the connectivity of north eastern region with Myanmar and Bangladesh in the TAR Southern Corridor.

As the part of measures aimed at evolving a strategy for promotion of exports through NE region, the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade were asked to conduct a study of Industrial Development and Export Potential of NE region and recommend measures. The report and recommendation have been received and the same are being examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Organisations.

(b) Follow up action on the recommendations of the High Level S.P. Shukla Commission report regarding trade and transit in relation to the North East is being taken up in consultation with other Ministries and Departments.

Airports Authority of India has planned a cargo terminal with all associated facilities as part of the Master Plan for development of Guwahati Airport.

RITES have been asked to conduct a transport optimisation study with a view to examine international linkages and transit/transshipment arrangements between India and neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan.

An Inter-Ministerial Task Force under the Ministry of Commerce has been set up to review the entire North-East border and inter-country trade issue and to report on trade opportunities and manufacturing potential for export in the North East.

Proposals have been received from State Governments of Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura to set up Export Promotional Industrial Parks (EPIPs) and are being examined. EPIPs in Assam and Meghalaya are already under implementation.

Meeting between official and trade delegations of Bangladesh and India frequently take place for exchange on issues of mutual interest.

STARRED QUESTION NO. 89

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2ND JUNE, 1998

CONNECTING MAJOR TOWNS OF ASSAM WITH GUWAHATI BY AIR TRANSPORT.

89. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) Whether there is any plan to connect all the Major towns of Assam with Guwahati and other major cities of India by air transport;

(b) Whether Government propose to connect Guwahati with Tezpur, Jorhat, Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh by the same flight;

(c) Whether Government propose to connect Dhubri with Guwahati by improving the aerodrome of Dhubri and introducing a flight; and

(d) Whether Government propose to give concessions to the passengers who are travelling to and fro to North-East as there is a demand for getting concession in airfare due to bottleneck of surface transport to the North-East?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANATH KUMAR)

(a),(b),(c) & (d) : (A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.)

Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat, Lilabari, Silchar and Tezpur towns in Assam are already airlinked.

Dhubri (Rupsi) Aerodrome is not fit for operation and needs major renovation/modification work. No scheduled airline has shown interest in operating to this place.

With a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services and taking into consideration the need for air transport services of different regions in the country particularly the North East Region, the Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines. The airlines are free to provide air serv

ices to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance with the route dispersal guidelines.

A proposal for dedicated air services to the North Eastern region is under formulation which envisages providing incentives to attract operators for connecting places in the North-East region.

(1) Fares on North-Eastern sectors are about 40% lower than the comparable sectors in the rest of the country.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1776

TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH JUNE 1998

RECRUITMENT IN ONGC

1176. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:

Will the MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Eastern Region, has not opened new recruitment for the last several years, where as, in the meantime many vacancies occurred due to retirements etc, and

(b) What are the reasons of closing such recruitment and by when these vacancies will be filled up?

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

(a) & (b) : ONGC Ltd. has been making recruitment in RBC. During the last five years, it has recruited 188 executives and 404 non-executives. The creation and filling up of posts is a continuous process and the same is done keeping in view the requirement from time to time.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2107

TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.07.98

LOOP LINE FROM MOYNAGURI TO GOALPARA

2107. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware of a public demand of alternative loop railway line from Moynaguri of West Bengal to Goalpara via Dhubri and Bilasipara Town of Assam; and

(b) If so, the action taken in this regard?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning & Programme Implementation (SHRI RAM NAIK)

(a)&(b) A Survey for a new line from New Mainaguri-Mathabhanga-New Coochbihar to Jogighopa via Dhubri has been taken up. Further consideration of the project will be possible after the survey report becomes available.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1810

TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.06.98

CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS ON SUBANSIRI AND SIANG RIVERS

1810. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the progress of harnessing Brahmaputra by construction three dams on the Subansiri and three dams on Siang (Dihang) river;

(b) Whether the pre-feasibility of these dams has been established by an inspection cum comprising officers of Central water commission, Geological Survey of India, Brahmaputra Board and Government of Arunachal Pradesh jointly during December, 1995 and February, 1996;

(c) Whether the investigation and preparation of DPRs are scheduled to be completed during Ninth Five year plan; and

(d) What is the progress upto now and whether it will be completed in time?

ANSWER:

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL)

(A) The investigation at alternative sites for Construction of three moderately high dams each on Subansiri and Siang river has been taken up by the Brahmaputra Board.

(b) Yes, sir.

(c) & (d) The investigation as well as the preparation of the Detailed Project Reports for 3 dams each on the rivers Subansiri & Siang have been taken up and are scheduled to be completed during IX and X plan respectively.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2008

TO BE ANSWERED ON 3RD JULY, 1998

SUPPLY OF SUGER THROUGH PDS

2008. SHRI DRUPAD BORHOHAIN:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that supply of suger through PDS will run out from mid-july this year;

(b) If so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) Government's plan to revive it?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV)

(a),(b)&(c) : No, sir, With the carry over stocks of the last season 1996-97 and the estimated production of suger during the current suger season 1997-98, the Central Govern-

ment have already made allocations of lavy suger for public Distribution System till August, 1998.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2164

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 6TH JULY, 1998

PROFITS OF TEA COMPANIES IN ASSAM

2164. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAI :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) What are the profits of tea companies in Assam for last three years, year-wise and investment of each company; and

(b) The percentage of profits re-invested for socio-economic development of Assam by each company?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGRE)

(a) & (b): Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2308

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7TH JULY, 1998

BODO AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL

2308. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) The steps taken to solve the Bodo Autonomous Council problems;

(b) Whether Government have decided to include 10 kilometer area between Bodo Autonomous Council boundary and Bhutan into the Bodo Autonomous Council; and

(c) The steps proposed by Government to solve the boundary problem of Bodo Autonomous Council?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI)

(a): A tripartite meeting was held on 25th and 26th May,

1998 at New Delhi with the officials of Govt. of India, representatives of Government of Assam and the representatives of Bodo groups to resolve amicably the Bodo problem including problems of Bodoland Autonomous Council. Though the issues were not resolved, the differences were narrowed down. It was agreed that the talks would be continued so that a consensus, can be arrived at.

(b)&(c): As per a recent decision of the Guwahati High Court, no village with less than 50% tribal population could be included in the Bodoland Autonomous Council. There are many such villages in the additional areas proposed for inclusion in the BAC which include the area between the present BAC boundary and Bhutan.

A final decision in the matter can be taken only after the Guwahati High Court decision is appropriately modified after a consensus has been reached.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2188

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 6TH JULY, 1998

DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY IN THE NORTH EAST

2188. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government have any plan to develop industries based on natural resources of North East; and

(b) If so, the projects to be set up during Ninth Five Year plan?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY

(a)&(b): While Planning and Development of Industries within a State is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government, the Central Government has been supplementing the effort of the North East Government towards the development of industries including those based on natural resources of the North East through special central assistance under special area programme of the North East Council

and through recently annouced New Industrial Policy for the North East region.

The actual projects that would be set up depend on the initiatives of the entrepreneurs.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1903

TO BE ANSWERED ON 12TH JUNE, 1998

FINANCIAL CRISIS FACED BY UNIVERSITIES OF ASSAM

1903. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) What grants or assistance have been offered by UGC to solve the financial difficulties faced by three states.

Ignou Universities of Assam, i.e., Guwahati University, Dibrugarh University and Assam Agricultural University at Jorhat, the details of the amount given to them for the last three years; and

(b) the amount given as grants assistance to silchar and Tezpur Central Universities for the last three years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a)&(b): Central Universities are established by Acts of Parliament and their maintenance and development expenditure is met by the Central Government through UGC. State Universities are set up by Acts of State Legislatures and their maintenance and development expenditure is met by the respective State Governments. UGC provides only development grants to the eligible State Universities and Colleges, as per the prescribed norms, and that too, only a part of their requirements. It is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government/agencies to provide reasonable level of plan and Non-Plan grants to the universities/colleges established by them.

The details of the grants released to the Universities in Assam during the last three years are as under:

Sl.No.	Name of the University	95-96	96-97	97-98
1.	Assam University	544.07	502.53	658.89
2.	Tezpur University	269.52	269.32	482.05
3.	Dibrugarh University	37.75	60.62	86.11
4.	Gauhati University	108.20	65.71	106.11
5.	Assam Agricultural University	Nil	Nil	Nil

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2350

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7TH JULY, 1998

SHUKLA COMMISSION REPORT

2350. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken by Government for transforming the North East on the basis of the suggestions of High Level Commission Report submitted to Prime Minister on March 7, 1997, and

(b) the concrete steps proposed by Government as per the S.P. Shukla Commission's Report?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI)

(a)&(b): The High Level Commission (HLC) for the North East headed by Shri S.P. Shukla, the then Member, Planning Commission, submitted its report to the then Prime Minister on March 7, 1997. The HLC critically examined the backlog in Basic Minimum Services (BMS) and gaps in infrastructure development such as power, Communication, Irrigation, Flood control etc. and recommended policy initiatives and pro-

grammes to bridge these gaps and rejuvenate the local economy along with measures for institutional reforms, additional resource mobilisation and effecting public participation in development activities. The HLC also estimated the total cost for providing BMS to the North Eastern States and indicative requirement of funds for infrastructure development in the Ninth Five Year Plan. The Recommendations will be implemented by dovetailing the Schemes with the Plans of the State Governments and the Central Ministries/Departments.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2351

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7TH JULY, 1998

RESCHEDULING KONCH RAJBONSHIS AS A TRIBE

2351. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are considering to reschedule Kocnh Rajbonshis of Assam as tribe;

(b) Whether Government will introduce a Bill for rescheduling of Chutias, Morans, Muttocks, Tai-Ahoms and Tea population of Assam as tribes; and

(c) If so, by when the Bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI)

(a): In so far as specification of Koch-Rajbonshi (not Konch-Rajbonshis) community as Scheduled Tribe in relation to State of Assam (excluding autonomous districts) is concerned, the matter is under examination in consultation with the concerned agencies.

(b): No, Sir.

(c): Does not arise.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3293

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 16TH JULY, 1998

SETTING UP OF E.I.I IN NORTH-EAST

3293. SHRI ARUN KUMAR SARMA:

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Food Processing Industries set-up in the Country during 8th Plan along with financial allocations, State-wise.

(b) Whether Government propose to setup food processing and food preservation Plants in North-East, Particularly in Assam during Ninth Plan;

(c) if so, the details thereof, including financial allocation and progress made, so far; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL)

(a): Our Food Processing Industries exist in both in the organised and unorganised sectors, and information regarding the number of food processing industries set up in the Country Statewise is not Centrally maintained. However, from August, 1991 to March, 1998, 4275 Industrial Entrepreneur Memoranda (IEMs) involving an investment of Rs. 51,825 crores have been filed for setting up of food processing industries in the Country. Of them 556 IEMs envisaging an investment of approximately Rs. 6876 crores have already been implemented. During the same period, 1071 proposals for Joint Venture/Setting up of 100% Export Oriented Units involving an investment of Rs. 18,649 crores, including foreign investment of Rs. 8756 crores, have been approved by the Government of India. Of these, 206 proposals envisaging an investment of Rs. 2010 crores have already been implemented.

According to the Annual survey of Industries 1994-95 published by the Central Statistical Organisation (Department of Statistics), there were 29407 factories in the various sectors of food processing in that year. Statewise distribution of those factories is shown at Annexure-I.

Food Processing Industries specifically re-eating to Fruit & Vegetables Sector are required to take a licence from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries under the Fruit Products Order (FPO) promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act. There are 4932 Fruit and Vegetable Processing Units which details are at Annexure-II.

Under the plan Schemes of the Ministry, financial assistance in the form of soft loan and grant is extended to Non-Government Organisations, Public Sector Undertakings, Private Sector Industries and Research Institutions for development of processed food sectors. These Schemes are project-specific and not state-specific. The outlay for the plan Schemes of the Ministry during the 8th plan was 217 crores.

(b): The Ministry of Food Processing Industries does not set up and food processing units directly in any State. However, under the Plan Schemes financial assistance is provided for promotion of food processing industries in the country including in the North-East. According to the Plan Schemes of the Ministry, difficult areas of the country have been defined & these include the North Eastern Region and these are eligible to get enhanced financial assistance.

(c) & (d): During 1997-98, financial assistance of Rs 78.49 lakhs has been extended in respect of proposal received from the North-East under the Plan Schemes. In addition, working capital subsidy of Rs. 60 lakhs has been provided to the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC).

ANNEXURE-I

STATE-WISE NUMBER OF FOOD PROCESSING UNITS IN THE FACTORY SECTOR AS PER ANNUAL SURVEY OF INDUSTRIES (1994-95)

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of the Factories
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10183
2.	Assam	734
3.	Bihar	433
4.	Goa	34
5.	Gujrat	1270
6.	Haryana	600
7.	Himachal Pradesh	46
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	69
9.	Karnataka	1221
10.	Kerala	1170
11.	Madhya Pradesh	1302
12.	Maharastra	2420
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Meghalaya	3
15.	Nagaland	5
16.	Orissa	425
17.	Punjab	1196
18.	Rajasthan	515
19.	Tamilnadu	3792
20.	Tripura	22
21.	Uttar Pradesh	2652
22.	West Bengal	1089
23.	Chandigarh	36
24.	Daman & Diu	5
25.	Delhi	125
26.	Pondichery	42
27.	Others	9

Total

29407

Annexure-II

STATE-WISE DIVISION OF FRUITS & VEGETABLE UNITS LICENSED UNDER THE FRUIT PRODUCTS ORDER 1955 ON 1.1.1998

1.	Andhra Pradesh	300
2.	Assam	25
3.	Bihar	58
4.	Gujrat	260
5.	Haryana	151
6.	Himachal Pradesh	90
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	83
8.	Karnataka	253
9.	Kerala	387
10.	Madhya Pradesh	104
11.	Maharashtra	934
12.	Meghalaya	14
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Nagaland	5
15.	Orissa	43
16.	Punjab	309
17.	Rajasthan	110
18.	Sikkim	3
19.	Tamil Nadu	452
20.	Tripura	4
21.	Uttar Pradesh	494
22.	West Bengal	298
23.	Andaman & Nicobar	3
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	3
25.	Chandigarh	54
26.	Dadar & Nagar Heveli	7
27.	Delhi	302
28.	Goa Daman & Diu	160
29.	Mizoram	3
30.	Pondicherry	14

TOTAL **4932**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3379

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 17TH JULY, 1998

GAS CRACKER UNIT AT TENGAKHAT

3379. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) how far the MOU regarding construction of gas cracker unit at Tengakhat of Assam is being implemented;

(b) the details of the progress of implementation; and

(c) by when it will be completed?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL)

(a), (b) & (c): The Assam industrial Development Corporation (AIDC), a State Government Undertaking, proposed for setting up of gas craker. Letter of Intent (LOI) LI:59(91) dated 25.1.91 was issued for setting up of a gas cracker of 3 lakh TPA Ethylene, which was subsequently transfered to Reliance Assam Petrochemicals Ltd. (RAPL), a joint venture between AIDC and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL).

Government of Assam have identified 1262 acres of land at Tengakhat of which 128 acres of land have already been handed over to RAPL. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has committed for supply of gas for producing 2 lakh TPA of Etyhylene at a concessional price for a period of 15 years. Gas supply agreement between RAPL and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) is in advance stage of discussions. RAPL has identified 3.2 lakh TPA Naphtha to be used as supplementary feedstock. Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals has recommended to Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for allocation of aforesaid Naphtha. For smooth operation of gas cracker, a decision has been taken to transfer Gas Authority of India Ltd.'s gas separation plant at Lakwa to RAPL. Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices is determining transfer price of Lakwa gas separation plant. RAPL has also recruited 65 tech(3)

nical personnels from the State of Assam who are undergoing training at Reliance Industries Ltd.

The project is estimated to cost Rs. 3600 crores and is expected to be commissioned in forty four months from the date of signing of gas supply agreement and handing over of entire land required for the project.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3974

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 22-7-1998

PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN ASSAM

3974. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what concrete steps have been taken by the Ministry to promote tourism in Assam in last three years, giving the details thereof;

(b) whether Government have any plan to establish tourist bungalows at Joisagar, Gargaon, Charaideo of Sibsagar district where the capitals of Ahom Kingdom located and the ancient monuments are there, which has great tourist's interest;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, by when Government will plan it?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG)

(a): During the last three years, the Ministry of Tourism has taken following steps to promote and develop tourism in Assam.

(1) 26 projects amounting to Rs. 515.08 lakhs were sanctioned for Promotion & Development of Tourism in Assam.

(2) A brochure on North East featuring Assam was produced.

A film on North East was brought out featuring Assam.

(4) North East was the theme for 1998 Suraj Kund Craft Mela giving Publicity to all North Eastern States including Assam.

(5) The Food Crafts Institute at Guwahati was upgraded into a full fledged Institute for Hotel Management and Catering.

(b),(c) and (d): The Ministry of Tourism provides funds to the State Government for establishing Tourist Bungalow on receipt of specific project proposals from the State Governments. The Government of Assam has not sent any proposal for setting up tourist bungalow at Jaisagar, Gargaon, Charaideo of Sibsagar district.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 524

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23RD JULY, 1998

FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN NORTH-EAST

524. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) How many units of food processing industries have been set-up by Government in North-Eastern States during the last three years;

(b) Whether Government have any plan to use the large production of pineapples in that area for food processing industries; and

(c) Whether Government have any plan to preserve the fruits produced in that region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL)

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House

Food Processing Industries operate both in the large, medium scale of "Organised" sector and the "unorganised" small tiny and cottage and household sectors. Given their

nature data on the tiny, cottage and household sector including on the number of such units are not available.

According to the Annual Survey of Industries 1994-95 published by the Central Statistical Organisation (Department of Statistics), there were 29407 factories of all types in the various product categories of the food processing industry e.g. cereals, milk, fruit and vegetables. The statewide distribution of these factories is set at Annexure-I

The Annual Survey of Industries covers all factories registered under Section 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of the Factories Act 1948, employing 10 or more workers and using electrical power, and those employing 20 or more workers but not using electrical power on any day of the preceding 12 months.

Food Processing companies specifically relating to the Fruit & Vegetables Sector are required to take a licence from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries under the Fruit Products Order (FPO) as amended till 1997 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act. 1932 Fruit and Vegetable Processing Units have been licensed under FPO upto January 1998. Their Statewise distribution is at Annexure-II.

As part of its promotional role to boost investment in the processed food sector, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides policy support in creating a favourable business environment and financial assistance through its plan Schemes for creation of infrastructural facilities and processing capacities for a variety of processed foods, including pineapple. Details of schemes are at Annexure-III.

Processed Food Industries in the North East

The North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), a public sector enterprise of this Ministry had set up a pineapple Juice Concentrate Plant at Nalkata, Tripura in 1988-89. It has processed 9700 metric tonnes of pineapple and produced 600 metric tonnes of pineapple juice concentrate from 1988-89 to 31.3.1998. During 1997-98, it processed 1293 metric tonnes of pineapples to produce 800 tonnes of pineapple juice concentrate. The Corporation is presently sick, and has therefore, been registered with the

Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). However, a major effort to revive the company and make it a healthy, indeed dynamic enterprise effectively leading the processed food industries in the North East is being initiated by the Ministry.

The outlay of the Ministry for projects involving the setting up/expansion/modernisation of food processing industries and the creation of infrastructural facilities for the processed food industry in the country during 1998-99 is Rs. 21 crores. Around 10% of this outlay is expected to be spent on projects having a bearing on the preservation of fruits and vegetables and other processed foods in the North Eastern States.

STATE-WISE NUMBER OF FOOD PROCESSING UNITS IN THE FACTORY SUCH AS PER ANNUAL SURVEY OF INDUSTRIES (1994-95).

SL. NO.	NAME OF THE STATE	NO. OF FACTORIES
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10183
2.	Assam	734
3.	Bihar	433
4.	Goa	34
5.	Gujarat	1270
6.	Haryana	600
7.	Himachal Pradesh	46
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	69
9.	Karnataka	1221
10.	Kerala	1170
11.	Madhya Pradesh	1302
12.	Maharashtra	2420
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Meghalaya	3
15.	Nagaland	5
16.	Orissa	425
17.	Punjab	1196
18.	Rajasthan	515
19.	Tamilnadu	3792
20.	Tripura	22
21.	Uttar Pradesh	2652

22.	West Bengal	1089
23.	Chandigarh	36
24.	Daman & Diu	5
25.	Delhi	125
26.	Pondichery	42
27.	Others	9

TOTAL 29407

(The Annual Survey of Industries covers all factories registered under Section 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of the Factories Act 1948, employing 10 or more workers and using electric power and those employing 20 or more workers but not using electrical power on any day of the preceding 12 months.)

STATE-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF FRUITS & VEGETABLE PROCESSING UNITS LICENSED UNDER THE FRUITS PRODUCT ORDER (ITO) AMENDED AS 1997 AS ON 1ST JANUARY 1999

Sl.No.	Name of the State	No. of Fruits & vegetables processing units
1.	Andhra Pradesh	300
2.	Assam	25
3.	Bihar	58
4.	Gujarat	260
5.	Haryana	151
6.	Himachal Pradesh	90
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	83
8.	Karnataka	253
9.	Kerala	387
10.	Madhya Pradesh	104
11.	Maharashtra	934
12.	Meghalaya	14
13.	Manipur	9
14.	Nagaland	5
15.	Orissa	43
16.	Punjab	309
17.	Rajasthan	110
18.	Sikkim	3
19.	Tamil Nadu	452

20.	Tripura	4
21.	Uttar Pradesh	494
22.	West Bengal	298
23.	Andaman & Nicobar	3
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	3
25.	Chandigarh	54
26.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	7
27.	Delhi	302
28.	Goa Daman & Diu	160
29.	Mizoram	3
30.	Pondicherry	14

TOTAL 4932

PLANE SCHEMES OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PROCESSED FOOD SECTOR (1999-2002)

The following plan Schemes are being operated by the Ministry for development of processed food sector during the 10th plan period.

1. Creation of Infrastructural facilities for food processing industries.
2. Creation of post-harvest handling facilities including setting up of cold storages, cold chain and pre-cooling facilities, including setting up of Food Processing Industrial Estates with common processing facilities such as analytical/quality control laboratories, cold storages/modified atmospheric cold storages, pollution control facilities etc. and creation of infrastructural facilities for preservation and processing of fish.
3. Support for setting up/modernisation/expansion of food processing units (including encouraging the concept of factory on wheels, low cost preservation technology etc. and setting up projects for meat poultry & dairy products).
4. Supporting traditional fish processing technologies and utilization of low-value fish by projects addressing commercial

cial production of value added products like protein concentrates, fish wafers & popularization of cheap indigenous technology of drying fish.

5. Strengthening backward linkages, particularly for Horticulture-based and Grain Processing Industries.

6. Marketing support for processed foods : Generic advertisement, helping small and tiny units market their products through brand name of established units etc.

7. Research & Development Programmes, including setting up of quality control labs.

8. Manpower development programmes : Training in processing Technology in horticulture, cereals, fish and meat.

9. Support for studies/Surveys/Seminars and awareness programmes Entrepreneurship Development Programmes etc

10. Support for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), Total Quality Management (TQM) and ISO-9000 certification.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1186

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 24TH JULY, 1998

OUT-BREAK OF GASTRO-ENTERITIS IN ASSAM

2351. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware that Gastro-enteritis broke out in tea-gardens of upper Assam in an epidemic form and took tolls of several lives;

(b) If so, the help offered to the State Health Department by the Ministry;

(c) Whether the tea-companies of Assam will be directed to have good medical facilities including doctors, nurses and medicines for eradicating health-hazards of tea workers; and

(d) Whether a comprehensive legislature would be brought for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) One officer was deputed from National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi during 30.6.98 to 7.7.98 to assist the State Health Authorities in epidemiological investigations and also suggest preventive and control measures.

(c) & (d): Since Health is a State subject, it is for the State Government to take necessary action in this matter?

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4539

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 28TH JULY, 1998

DISINVESTMENT IN BONGAIGAON REFINERY AND PETROCHEMICALS LTD.

4539. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Government have taken the decision to disinvestment Bongaigaon Refinery and petrochemicals Ltd. along with other four public Sector undertakings, as reported in the Economic Times, Delhi Edition on 26th June, 1998 and

(b) Whether this is due to the general disinvestment policy of Government as Regards to the public sector undertakings?

FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA)

(a) The Disinvestment Commission has made certain recommendations on disinvestment in Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. The matter is under consideration of Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4584

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 28TH JULY, 1998

POOR CONDITION OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY IN NORTH EASTERN REGION

4584. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that National Highways No 31, 37, 39 and others which run through the North Eastern States are under deplorable conditions?

(b) Whether there are any plan on the part of this Ministry to improve it?

(c) Why the construction of roads under World Bank assistance in Assam is being delayed? and

(d) Whether his Ministry has any plan to expedite it?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) & (b) Maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process. National Highways in the North Eastern Region are maintained in Traffic-worthy condition within the available funds.

(c) & (d): Government of India is responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways only. No National Highway in Assam is being constructed under World Bank assistance.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 607

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 29TH JULY, 1998

POLITICAL DIALOGUE WITH ULFA

607. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are taking steps to initiate Po-

litical dialogue with ULFA?

(b) Whether there are any conditions for such dialogue? and

(c) Whether there is any plan to suspend army operation as a gesture and create congenial atmosphere for a dialogue?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (L.K. ADVANI)

(a) & (b): Government of Assam and Government of India have appealed to militant groups including ULFA to give up arms and to come forward for unconditional talks to settle all issues through dialogue.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of Union Government at present.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1

To be answered on the 30th November, 1998

TRADE THROUGH MOREH AND DAWKI

1. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) What is the volume of trade transacted through Moreh in Manipur and Dawki in Meghalaya during the last three years;

(b) Whether it is a fact that the volume of trade declined in the first half of the current year;

(c) If so, to what extent alongwith the causes and action being taken by the Ministry to eradicate the causes; and

(d) What difficulty are being faced by the coal exporters to Bangladesh through Dawki post and what steps the Ministry have taken to remove the difficulties?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRI SHNA HEGDE)

(a) The volume of trade transacted with Myanmar through Moreh in Manipur and Tamu in Myanmar and with Bangladesh

through Dawki in Meghalaya during the last three years is as indicated below :-

	(Rs.in lakhs)	
Moreh/ Tamu Border point	Exports	Imports
1995-96	1043.98	489.77
1996-97	2969.12	1605.29
1997-98	2531.25	3535.34
Dawki land Customs Station		
1995-96	5397.02	Nil
1996-97	Not available	Nil
1997-98	1992.48	Nil

(The figures are as given by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics).

(b) As per the report received from Custom Authorities, the volume of trade transacted through Moreh in Manipur and Tamu in Myanmar has declined during the period April-Sept '98 where as there has been an increase in volume of trade with Bangladesh through Dawki in Meghalaya in the current year.

(c) The volume of trade via Moreh-Tamu sector during the period April-September 1998 as per the details given by the Custom Authorities is as under :-

	(Rs. in Lakhs)	
	Exports	Imports
April-Sept'98	172.97	197.44

The decline in volume of trade is due to Myanmar Government deciding that all border trade should be transacted in US Dollar with their exports preceding any imports from India. Myanmar Government had also put some restriction on commodities as could be traded through the border trade which had created some confusion at the border post and had adversely affected the border trade. As a result of discussions held with the Myanmar side during bilateral talks held in October, 1998, agreed minutes have been signed

29.10 98. It is hoped that with this understanding, the volume of border trade is likely to go up in future.

(d) Coal exporters to Bangladesh through Dawki mainly face the problem of infrastructural bottlenecks due to bad condition of Jowai-Amlarem-Dawki road, which is the supply line. This is a State highway and falls under the jurisdiction of Government of Meghalaya.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 79

TO BE ANSWERED ON 30TH NOVEMBER, 1998

AGRICULTURAL LABOUR IN THE COUNTRY

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of LABOUR

be pleased to state :

(a) What is the number of agricultural labour in the country; and

(b) When will Government bring a comprehensive Bill in parliament to fix minimum wages and other amenities for these workers?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR

(DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA)

(a) The number of agricultural workers in the country according to 1991 census is 74,597,744 (excluding Jammu & Kashmir).

(b) The Minimum wages Act. 1948 which provides for fixation and revision of minimum wages is also applicable to agricultural workers. Further, a Proposal for enactment of a comprehensive central legislation for agricultural workers is under active consideration of the Government in consultation with other Ministries/ Departments.

It would be difficult at this stage to indicate the exact duration this process may take.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 174

(To be answered on the 1st December, 1998)

Upgradation of Guwahati airport.

174. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) When the work to upgrade Guwahati Airport as international airport will be completed ;

(b) Whether the Ministry have any plan to link Guwahati with Delhi everyday in a week by Indian Airlines;

(c) Whether Indian Airlines flights do not connect Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Silchar and Tezpur from Guwahati; and

(d) Whether Government propose to take steps connecting Guwahati to these places by Indian Airlines shortly?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION

(SHRI ANANTH KUMAR)

(a) Airport authority of India has plans to upgrade Guwahati Airport to international standards during the IXth Five Year Plan period.

(b),(c) and (d) : Indian Airlines operates 5 flights a week on Delhi/Guwahati route. Indian Airlines was earlier operating services between Guwahati to Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Silchar and Tezpur. These services have been withdrawn because of poor passenger load. Because of aircraft capacity constraint, Indian Airlines has at present no plans to operate any services.

TO BE ANSWERED ON 1.12.1998. UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 270.

ENHANCEMENT OF POWER IN NORTH-EAST REGION

270. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) The steps taken by Government to enhance power generation in North-East during the last three years ;

(b) Whether there is any project to be commissioned this year;

(c) What amount of power in totality can be generated in the near future; and

(d) What is the position of Amguri project in Assam?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF POWER

(SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM)

(a) To enhance power in North-Eastern region, during the last three years, following steps were taken :

i) Tuirial H.E. project (2x30 MW), Mizoram was sanctioned in July, 1998 for implementation by NEEPCO.

ii) Doyang HE project (3x25 MW), Nagaland & Ranganadi (3x135 MW) Arunachal Pradesh are being executed by NEEPCO.

iii) Kopilli Extension (2x50 MW) Assam was successfully commissioned.

iv) Nuranang (3x2 MW) HE project, Arunachal Pradesh—all the three Units were rotated on 9.8.1997.

(b) This year, by March, 1999 Unit-I of Doyang H.E. Project (3x25 MW) Nagaland is likely to be spun.

(c) In the near future the following projects of total installed capacity 625 MW as per the details given below, are programmed to be commissioned :

Name of the project	Latest commissioning
State/ capacity	Schedule
1. Karbi Langpi Assam/ 2x50 MW	2001-2002
2. Dhansiri Assam/5x3x1.33 MW	2001-2002
3. Likim-Ro Nagaland/5x8 MW	2000-2001
4. Ranganadi Arunachal Pradesh/3x135 MW	2000-2001
5. Doyang Nagaland/3x25 MW	1998-2000

(d) : Gas-Based CCGT at Amguri (Dist. Sibsagar)

The project sanctioned in State Sector was posed for execution in private Sector. However, as informed by ASEB, it is likely to be executed by NTPC in central Sector. Subsequently in a meeting held in C.E.A. it was informed by NTPC that the supply of gas for the above project is presently not available. The final decision regarding executing agency is yet to be taken.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1379

TO BE ANSWERED ON 10-12-1998

NON-LAPSABLE FUND FOR NORTH-EASTERN STATES

1379- SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) What is the total amount of the non-lapsable fund for the North-Eastern States during the current year as projected in the budget, State-wise;

(b) Which authority will use this fund for development work and how this would be used ; and

(c) Whether authority will use this fund for development work are there in P.M's package of the last year, If so, their names?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PARLAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

(SHRI RAM NAIK)

(a) to (c) : A Non-lapsable Central pool of Resources has recently been constituted for assisting development projects, including in the infrastructure sector, in the North-East and Sikkim. The funds being credited by various Union Ministries/ Departments to the pool are expected to enable meeting the initial requirements for this purpose during the current financial year.

2. Project proposals relating, inter alia, to PM's package, are envisaged to be identified, from time to time, for consideration of assistance from the Central pool for implementation through appropriate Central/State agencies.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1967

TO BE ANSWERED ON 16TH December 1998

Production of crude Oil

1967 SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of petroleum & Natural Gas

be pleased to State :

(a) How much crude Oil has been produced in different oilfields in the country by O.N.G.C and O.I.L. during the last three years.

(b) How much crude Oil has been produced by the private companies,

(c) Whether the crude Oil produced in Assam and North-East is sufficient for four refineries located in Assam (including N.R.L) and

(d) If not, What is the shortage?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS

(SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

(a) & (b) The crude Oil production from ONGC, OIL and private / JV fields during the last three years are as under

(Figures in MMT)

Year	ONGC	OIL	JV	Total
1995-96	31.635	2.882	0.65	35.167
1996-97	28.685	2.870	1.345	32.900
1997-98	28.250	3.094	2.514	33.858

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Numaligarh Refinery is expected to be commissioned in March '99. The shortage of crude for 1999-2000 for four refineries located in Assam (including NRL) is expected to be 1.886 MMT.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO, 2042

TO BE ANSWERED ON 17 DECEMBER, 1998

ASSISTANCE TO ASSAM AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

2042 SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) How much assistance have been given to the Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat by the ICAR in last three years and

(b) Whether Government have any proposal to fund the university for research work in the coming Years?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

(SHRI SOMPAL)

(a) Over Rs. 10.34 crors have been given to Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in the last three years.

(b) The Council will continue to fund Assam Agriculture University through All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP), Adhoc Schemes and Revolving fund schemes in future also. Two adhoc schemes for funding through the A.F.Cess Fund of ICAR for Fishery College of Assam Agriculture University are pipeline. A Seed Technology Research Centre and AICRP on under-utilised crops have also been proposed during IXth plan. In addition, Catch-up Grant for upgradation and modernisation of infrastructure and laboratory facilities has also been proposed during IXth plan.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2103.

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 17TH DECEMBER, 1998.

Sickness of NERAMAC.

2103. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to State :

(a) What steps have been taken to remove the sickness of North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC) :

(b) Whether Government have any proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC; and

(c) If so, where will these be located in North-Eastern States?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL)

(a) In December, 1996, NERAMAC was referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) because of its sickness, BIFR appointed the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) as the Operating Agency (OA) for preparation of a rehabilitation package in respect of NERAMAC. The rehabilitation package prepared by IDBI was considered by BIFR in April, 1998. As directed by BIFR, action has been taken for obtaining Government's approval for the induction of fresh funds as also financial restructuring of NERAMAC.

(b) & (c) : There is no proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC. However, as a part of the rehabilitation package prepared by the OA, it is proposed to establish a post-harvest handling centre for ginger at Burnihat, Meghalaya.

STARRED QUESTION NO . 282

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 18TH DECEMBER, 1998

MEDICAL COLLEGE IN ASSAM

282. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government have sanctioned any money to Assam Government for improving the medical colleges at Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar, during the last three years;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) If not, the reasons thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH
AND FAMILY WELFARE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)**

(SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI)

(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement referred in reply to parts (a) to (c) of the Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 282 for 18.12.1998.

(a) to (c) :

The planning Commission has provided central assistance of Rs. 2 crores for improvement of emergency care services in Guwahati Medical College, Assam in Annual plan 1996-97. In addition, funds are provided on yearly basis by the planning commission for support to the Guwahati Medical College, Assam and through the North-Eastern Council under its scheme to support medical College viz. Assam Medical College, Guwahati Medical College and Silchar Medical College.

2. The North-Eastern Council Secretariat has further informed that through an ongoing scheme for supporting development of three Medical Colleges in Assam since 1996-97, funds to the tune of Rs. 336.86 lakhs have been released. Under this scheme, it is proposed to cover all the medical colleges in Assam during the entire 9th Five-year plan for which a provision of Rs. 40.00 crores has been made. By another scheme for providing support for the development of Guwahati Medical College, an amount of Rs. 103.00 lakhs has been released during the 8th Five year plan and Rs. 50.00 lakhs during 1997-98. The provision under this scheme for 9th Five Year plan is Rs. 2.00 crores. Further, under a scheme for construction of paying cabins, an amount of Rs. 10.00 lakhs in 1997-98 has been released for construction of paying cabins in the three medical colleges of Assam at Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, my first supplementary is this. The three Medical College at Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar were established to cater to the needs of health-care of not only Assam but also of the other

States of North-Eastern region. But, many modern amenities, tools, appliances and machines also are not available in these colleges now. From the reply I see that a very meagre amount is sanctioned to the college by the planning commission and the NEC. This harms the interests of medical students as well as patients of the region. So, my humble question is whether the Ministry have planned to improve the situation and also whether they have any plan to increase the assistance by Rs. 5 crores to each college annually.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI : Sir, we are really for the improvement of any institution like these medical colleges. The Central Government is very much interested to improve the conditions in educational institutions, particularly medical colleges. But, unfortunately, the three medical colleges that the hon. Member has referred to, the Medical college in Dibrugarh, the Guwahati Medical College and the medical college in Silchar, are found wanting. I really agree with him when he says that the conditions in these colleges are found wanting. Unfortunately, this subject has been in correspondence with the State Government officials, the Health Ministry officials and the planning Commission for quite some time. In 1996, the Health Ministry did receive a communication from the Health Minister of Assam explaining the conditions prevailing in the Guwahati Medical College. Immediately after that, our people in the Health Ministry have taken up the matter with the planning commission. They have also referred it to the State Government suggesting that problems of this type must be addressed to the planning commission so as to get some money allocated specifically for these purpose. The State Government, the Government of Assam, actually responded to that request. But their demand was a little more. In the meantime, the Health Ministry also deputed a team headed by a Deputy Director-General, Health Services, from the Health Ministry, for personally visiting and finding out the conditions prevailing in the particular college. They have also brought some information. They did recommended something to the Government. The Government is still saying that the Health Ministry has no provision. We are not in a position to provide any financial assistance to the college because the funds must be

availed through the planning Commission. That should certainly come from the State Government to the planning Commission. Therefore the Health Ministry requested the State Government officials to find a way out and make their provision in the plan paper. But unfortunately, the State Government of Assam said, considering the size, the plan size, they could not accommodate this much amount, around Rs. 10 crores. They could not accommodate that. They said that considering the plan size, they could not accommodate it in 1996 and they could not accommodate it in 1997 also. But then, we have taken up the matter with the planning commission and suggested they should provide a little money.

To begin with the immediate needs of a particular college like establishment of an emergency casualty and certain other things, must be attended to. We had requested the planning commission to provide Rs. two crores for that purpose and that amount was straightway released to the State Government. But in the present Government, the Finance Minister has made an announcement to utilise the Non-lapsable Central pool of Resources for the Seven North-Eastern States, and all the Central Government departments who have that little unspent money, that money is to be pooled together and that money is to be used for development of the North-Eastern region States. But we find that the demand from the Assam Government is still lacking even in respect of the Non-lapsable Central pool of Resources also. They have not asked for any money for improvement of the health sector. But in fact, we do not find money in the Health Ministry because we have no provision to offer money to the State Government because this comes under the State Government. The Union Government, keeping in view the infrastructural requirement, suitably makes its recommendations to the planning commission. The union Government also makes its suggestions to the respective State Governments. Thereafter, the planning Commission makes the allocation. Sir, you may be aware that Rs. two crores was released for starting the emergency services at the initiative of the Prime Minister.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Sir, the Minister can send information to the hon. member.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Sir, my second supplementary is, the hon. Minister has admitted that there is some difficulty in respect of health care at that place. He has also said that the Assam Government did not ask for any money. But that is not the case. I will have to inquire about this fact, whether it is correct or not. That is a different thing. Because of the prevalence of this complicated disease, the people in that region are facing some difficulty. The patients from Assam and the North-Eastern region have to go outside for their treatment. It is very difficult for them to get the necessary health care against this disease in the North-Eastern region. So, will the Ministry think over to establish a branch of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Guwahati to cater to the health care of the people of the North-Eastern States? If this is done, perhaps, the Health Ministry can help the people a lot.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI : Sir, every State Government has its own resources and infrastructure and they are well within their rights to improve them or raise any institution to help and meet the health care of the people in their respective regions. We in the Health Ministry, really recommend and suggest the modalities and way-outs. That is all we can do at the moment.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2323

(To be answered on 18th December, 1998)

DISCOVERIES/ INVENTIONS OF REGIONAL RESEARCH LABORATORY, JORHAT

2323- SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) What are the details of major discoveries or inventions of Regional Research Laboratory, Jorhat, during the last ten years; and

(b) Whether Government have any plan to extend the activities of Regional Research Laboratory in the near future?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) During the last ten years Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) Jorhat have developed a number of technologies, the major among them are listed in the ANNEXURE.

(b) In order to strengthen the Research & Development activities of RRL, Jorhat, a modernisation plan worth around Rs. 500 lakh has been taken up to enable it to meet more effectively the Science & Technology demands of the North-East region.

ANNEXURE.

Major technologies developed during last years

(i) Drugs & Pharmaceuticals

Arteether from commercial artemisinin, a novel anti-malarial drug effective against primaquin resistant malaria;

(ii) Cement & Minerals

- 50 TPD Mini cement plant using vertical shaft kiln technology;

- Ferrocement elements for low cost roofing, storage tanks etc;

- Design/ prototype for agglomeration and granular products;

(iii) Medicinal and aromatic plants

Agrotechnologies for cultivation of aromatic Oil bearing plants namely patchouli, Cymbopogon citratus and Annatto

(iv) Utilisation/ disposal of agricultural and other wastes

- File cover, File board, duplex board from agricultural cellulosic wastes;

- Design/ prototype for disposal of solid wastes;

- fibre from banana stem;

(v) Miscellaneous

- High strength proppant;

- Liquid deodorant;

- Multi purpose valve;

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO . 2332.

To be answered on the 21 st December, 1998

TRADE WITH MYANMAR AND CHINA

2332. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government propose to use the Stilwell Road which connects Ledo (Assam) with Myanmar and China via Arunachal for commercial purpose;

(b) Whether Government have any plan to improve it; and

(c) If not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE)

(a) to (c) India and Myanmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 1997 under which the two countries agreed to cooperate with each other for the upgradation/ construction of border roads in Myanmar. along the Indo-Myanmar border, in the interest of promoting economic cooperation between the two countries, Under the provisions of this MoU, the two countries have agreed to cooperate with each other, in the first instance, for the upgradation of the Tamu-Kalembo Road, along the Indo-Myanmar border across Manipur.

The Myanmar Government have agreed in principle to the opening up of other border points as may be notified by mutual agreement comes into effect.

There are therefore, no existing plans to use the Stillwell road most of which runs with in Myanmar.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2424

TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST DEC. 1998

STIPENDS TO SC/ST STUDENTS

2424. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government have any plan to support the students of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the form of stipends;

(b) If so, what amount has been sanctioned during last three years, State-wise;

(c) Whether Government have any plan to sanction money for building hostels for students of Scheduled Castes and Tribes; and

(d) If so, what amount has been sanctioned and the number of hostel buildings built including capacities of hostels in last three Years. State-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

SMT. MANEKA GANDHI

(a) : Yes, Sir.

(b) : Statement enclosed at Annexure-I

(c) : Yes, Sir.

(d) : Statement enclosed at Annexure-II-VII

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship to SC and ST students - Central assistance released during last three Years. (Rs In Lakhs)

S. No	State/UT	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1	Andhra Pradesh	2980.339	3124.637	3197.288
2	Assam	625.985	52.038	0
3	Bihar	0	0	0
4	Goa	0.4	0	0
5	Gujarat	762.75	494.89	0
6	Haryana	70.7	2.26	0
7	Himachal Pradesh	14.38	24.73	0
8	Jammu & Kashmir	79.83	78.07	14.9
9	Karnataka	1078.82	1374.526	0
10	Kerala	41.294	634.495	0
11	Madhya Pradesh	820.89	1982.79	0

12.	Maharastra	2557.2	2371.8	967.78
13.	Manipur	227.78	374.5	0
14.	Meghalaya	96.6	371.843	0
15.	Mizoram	122.4	144.5	0
16.	Nagaland	243.427	404.9	0
17.	Orissa	741.291	531.43	47.16
18.	Punjab	237.05	0	0
19.	Rajasthan	665.4	934.75	84.7
20.	Sikkim	0	0	0
21.	Tamil Nadu	693	1817.74	396.78
22.	Tripura	82.358	29.346	0
23.	Uttar pradesh	1669.82	2070.823	705.392
24.	West Bengal	635.286	1146.122	0
25.	Andanam & Nicobar	1.28	1.85	0
26.	Daman & Due	2.64	2.089	0
27.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	5.68	0	0
28.	Delhi	0	0	0
29.	Guwahati project	3	3	3
30.	Pondicherry	26.03	20	0

Total	14485.63	17993.129	5417
-------	----------	-----------	------

ANNEXURE-II

(Rs. IN LAKHS)

DETAIL OF CENTRAL ASSISTANCE RELEASED UNDER THE SCHEME OF GIRLS HOSTEL FOR SCs

S. NO.	ST/STE/U.T.	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	Andhra Pradesh	200.85	Nil	44.90
2.	Assam	9.00	Nil	9.00
3.	Bihar	Nil	46.54	Nil
4.	Gujarat	14.13	3.20	Nil
5.	Haryana	Nil	Nil	Nil
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	Nil	Nil	Nil
7.	Karnataka	37.50	78.50	24.36
8.	Kerala	23.51	Nil	Nil
9.	Maharashtra	Nil	21.12	Nil
10.	Madhya Pradesh	Nil	350.00	182.74
11.	Manipur	Nil	Nil	Nil
12.	Orissa	49.59	40.00	Nil

13. Punjab	3.00	Nil	Nil
14. Rajasthan	12.78	Nil	Nil
15. Tamil Nadu	100.00	Nil	339.00
16. Tripura	24.00	8.65	Nil
17. Uttar Pradesh	166.93	31.82	Nil
18. West Bengal	58.70	Nil	Nil
19. Chandigarh	Nil	100.00	Nil
20. Pondicherry	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	564.88	648.01	600.00

ANNEXURE-III

(Rs. IN LAKHS)

DETAIL OF CENTRAL ASSISTANCE RELEASED UNDER THE SCHEME OF BOYS HOSTEL FOR SCs

S. NO.	STSTE/U.T.	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	Andhra Pradesh	198.90	Nil	Nil
2.	Assam	9.00	Nil	5.50
3.	Bihar	Nil	75.00	Nil
4.	Gujarat	65.16	Nil	Nil
5.	Haryana	1.82	5.00	4.00
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	3.15	Nil	19.51
7.	Karnataka	324.45	121.50	Nil
8.	Kerala	Nil	Nil	Nil
9.	Maharashtra	93.83	67.54	Nil
10.	Madhya Pradesh	216.30	500.00	666.75
11.	Manipur	Nil	Nil	Nil
12.	Orissa	25.29	Nil	30.00
13.	Punjab	3.00	Nil	30.00
14.	Rajasthan	220.01	143.96	129.66
15.	Tamil Nadu	100.00	Nil	Nil
16.	Tripura	6.00	12.00	20.00
17.	Uttar Pradesh	166.93	Nil	Nil
18.	West Bengal	134.01	Nil	Nil
19.	Chandigarh	15.00	15.00	Nil
20.	Pondicherry	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total		1482.85	940.00	905.42

ANNEXURE-IV

DETAILS OF BENEFICIARIES/ HOSTEL UNDER GIRLS HOSTEL SCHEME FOR SCs

S. NO	STSTE/U.T.	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4800/32	Nil/Nil	10940/24
2.	Assam	144/16	Nil/Nil	84/20
3.	Bihar	Nil/Nil	250/5	Nil/Nil
4.	Gujrat	200/4	401/8	Nil/Nil
5.	Haryana	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
7.	Karnataka	265/4	350/5	527/8
8.	Kerala	150/1	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
9.	Maharashtra	Nil/Nil	208/6	Nil/Nil
10.	Madhya Pradesh	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
11.	Manipur	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
12.	Orissa	270/9	300/10	Nil/Nil
13.	Punjab	32/1	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
14.	Rajasthan	75/3	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
15.	Tamil Nadu	1000/10	Nil/Nil	1300/26
16.	Tripura	120/2	40/2	Nil/Nil
17.	Uttar Pradesh	250/5	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
18.	West Bengal	240/3	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
Total		7546/90	1549/36	12851/78

ANNEXURE-V

DETAILS OF BENEFICIARIES/ HOSTEL UNDER BOYS HOSTEL SCHEME FOR SCs

S. NO	STSTE/U.T.	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	Andhra Pradesh	3880/13	Nil/Nil	84/20
2.	Assam	144/19	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
3.	Bihar	Nil/Nil	250/5	Nil/Nil
4.	Gujrat	795/9	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
5.	Haryana	20/1	55/2	50/1
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	24/1	Nil/Nil	88/2
7.	Karnataka	Nil/Nil	1025/20	Nil/Nil
8.	Kerala	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
9.	Maharashtra	956/16	605/12	Nil/Nil

10. Madhya Pradesh	1050/21	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
11. Manipur	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
12. Orissa	1526/15	Nil/Nil	60/2
13. Punjab	56/1	Nil/Nil	Nil/2
14. Rajasthan	725/23	1285/47	Nil/Nil
15. Tamil Nadu	600/6	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
16. Tripura	Nil/Nil	160/3	Nil/Nil
17. Uttar Pradesh	1000/11	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
18. West Bengal	520/7	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
19. Chandigarh	Nil/Nil	200/1	Nil/Nil
20. Pondicherry	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil	Nil/Nil
Total	11297/133	3580/90	282/27

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2618

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 22ND DECEMBER-1998

IMPROVEMENT OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY 52

2618.

SHRI NABAM REBIA :

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that National Highway No. 52 is in bad shape;

(b) If so, the reasons for not building it properly;

(c) Whether Government have any plan to rebuild it through BRTF; and

(d) Whether Government have any plan to improve Steel We Road from Ledo to Burma Border in near future?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT

(DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) & (b) NH. 52 is being maintained in trafficable condition

within the available resources.

(c) The State Government of Assam has not agreed to this suggestion.

(d) This is a State Road for which Central Government is not responsible.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2558

TO BE ANSWERED ON TUESDAY THE 22ND DECEMBER, 1998

DISINVESTMENT OF CAPITAL OF BONGAIGAON REFINERY
2558 SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Finance is going to deal with the Reliance Company to disinvest a certain percentage of capital of Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd.; and

(b) If so, When is it going to be dealt with and upto what percentage?

ANSWER

FINANCE MINISTER

(SHRI YASHWANT SINHA)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO . 2719

(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1998)

KILLING OF MILITANTS BY UNCONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES IN ASSAM

2719 SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that unconstitutional agencies like terrorist organisations are killing people including militants in Assam during the last three Months ;

- (b) If so, the number of people killed, district-wise and
(c) Whether the State police have registered any case against these killers?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI)

(a) to (b) : Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS IN THE MEETING HELD ON 22.6.98

Name of the Member : Shri Drupad Borgohain

Question:

18 (2) What is Ministry's view on the burden of proof being on the complaint under the IMDT Act?

Reply :

The burden of proof under the Foreigners Act, 1946 is on the person complained against. However, the burden of proof under the IMDT Act, 1983 is on the complainant. IMDT Act, 1983 is applicable only to Assam and as result puts Assam in a discriminatory position from rest of the country. This also makes it more difficult to detect and deport illegal immigrants in Assam. The Ministry is of the view that the burden of proof should be shifted to the person complained against in Assam also as in rest of the country. However, since there has been no political consensus on the issue it has not been possible to carry out necessary amendment in this regard.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) & (b) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 359 TO ANSWERED ON 10.07.1998 ASKED BY SHRI DRUPAD BORGHAIN REGARDING REVAMPING OF N-II PLANT NAMRUP UNIT OF HFC.

The revamp of the Namrup I, II & III units of HFC has been approved at a fresh investment of Rs. 350 crore. In the context of mobilisation of the term loan required for the

revamp project, the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Limited (ICICI) has suggested that the Namrup units be constituted into a new Company. This suggestion has been accepted by the Board of Directors of HFC. The final decision in the matter will entail the approval of the rehabilitation scheme of HFC, which is to be submitted to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). The revision of the pay scales of the employees of the Namrup units is linked to the segregation of these units.

(b) The urea produced by the all manufacturing units is sold at a uniform price of Rs. 3660/- per MT, excluding local taxes. The retention price subsidy payable to the units in question as on 7.7.98 is tabulated below:

PSU	Name of the unit	Rs./MT
		Retention Price Subsidy
RCF	Trombay	
NFL	Nangal	1609
	Panipat	3700
	Bhatinda	3339
	Vijaipur	3991
	Vijaipur-II	1229
HFC	Namrup-III	3006
	Barauni	0403
	Durgapur	7615
		6535

The retention price subsidy payable to different plants varies, inter-alia, according to the capacity of the plant, vintage, technology, financing pattern, feedstock and consumption norms. The retention price scheme, under which the retention prices are fixed on the basis of a combination of norms and actuals, is non-discriminatory in nature.

Q. No. 448 - SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION ON RAILWAY TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.7.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGHAIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I come from the North-East Region. Generally, I travel by trains which have been mentioned in the main question. The Kamrup

Express train is a very important train for us. It comes from Assam and North-East Region. It is a link train to the southern areas of our country and to the western parts of the country. This train is always not punctual. Sometimes it is late by hours, 7 hours and 9 hours. For this reason, people coming from this region do not get connection trains from Calcutta to go to Mumbai and to the Southern region. Will the hon. Minister issue instructions to the concerned people to ensure that this train is punctual so that passengers from this region do not face any difficulty in getting connection trains from Calcutta to other parts of the country? Will he promise that this will be done?

श्री नीतीश कुमार, जहाँ तक पंचकुऐलिटी का सवाल है, इसके लिए मैंने सदन में सूचित किया रेलगाड़ियों को रेलवे बोर्ड के मॉनीटर में हम लोग डालने जा रहे हैं और यहीं से उसकी निगरानी होगी कि यह गाड़ियाँ समय पर चलें। रेल की गलती से विलम्ब न हो लेकिन रेलों के बाहर जो कारण हैं, प्राकृतिक विपदा या इनसरजेंसी या दुसरी कोई घटनाएं, उसके चलते अगर कोई बाधा होती है

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: It is not due to insurgence. It is a common phenomenon.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Please listen to me fully. जो रेल के चलने के कारण हैं जिसके चलते विलम्ब होता है, उसके बारे में तो कुछ नहीं किया जा सकता है। लेकिन रेल के सिस्टम के हिसाब से कोई त्रुटि हो तो उस त्रुटि को दूर किया जाएगा।

Q. No. 461. ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT C SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULE TRIBES (ORDER AMENDMENT BILL

ON 20.7.1998

SMT. MANEKA GANDHI : This Ministry has, for the first time, worked out modalities. We are going to the Cabinet. Once we work out the modalities, then everybody will know if they fit into one. If they fit the requirement, it will be notified.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : I want to know one thing from the hon. Minister. A report of the Select Committee on the continuation of the Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order Amendment Bill, 1986, in respect of Assam, was presented to the Lok Sabha on the 12th August, 1997. The Committee recommended certain tribes to be included in the

Constitution as Scheduled Tribes. What are those tribes to be included into? Secondly, when would this Bill be brought to give them the status of Scheduled Tribes?

SMT. MANEKA GANDHI: Whether it is Assam or Maharashtra or Andhra Pradesh or any other State, the same answer will apply to all. You may recommend or the State may recommend certain people to be included or a certain group to be included. It requires a Bill to come before the Parliament. I cannot bring a Bill every second week because of one particular community. It has to be done comprehensively. We have to take the parliament Seriously.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: the Select Committee was there and it recommended it.

SMT. MANEKA GANDHI: Yes, there are certain things that are recommended. We are just awaiting clearance for all the 1400, whether 'Yes' or 'No', so that we can bring it forward.

SUPPLYMENTARY ON QUESTION NO. 524 ON 23.7.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, let me first thank the hon. Minister for giving me the reply in detail.

Sir, the hon. Minister, in his reply says that the North-Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), a public sector enterprise of this Ministry has set up a Pineapple Juice Concentrate plant at Nalkata, Tripura in 1988-89. It is a big help for the pineapple cultivators of Tripura. Sir, Meghalaya and Assam also produce a large quantity of pineapples of good quality. Will his Ministry set up projects of this type in Meghalaya as well as in Assam in the near future? has he any plan to do so?

SHRI SOMPAL: Sir, the Ministry does not have any plan to set up such a plant in any of the North-East States. But we have several plans to promote setting up of such plants. If anybody comes, we would provide assistance to the private company, NGO, Government, cooperative or any kind of organisation, which comes forward to take up such a project.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, I have asked the Minister whether the Government has any plan to preserve the fruits produced in the region. The Minister replies that different schemes are there for this purpose. Now, I ask him what concrete measures have been taken to implement these schemes in the North-Eastern region States. How many units to preserve fruits are to be set up in the near future?

SHRI SOMPAL: There are so many schemes. I can give details to the hon. Member.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries operates several plan Schemes for the development of food processing industries in the country. Under these schemes financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid and soft loan is provided to Non-Governmental Organisations, Co-operatives, Public Sector Undertakings, Private Sector Industry, Research Development and Human Resource Development Institution etc. Higher rates of such assistance are provided to difficult areas, which include North-Eastern States.

The Schemes which are specific to Fruit & Vegetable Industry are:-

1. Scheme for development of infrastructural facilities
2. Scheme for setting up /expansion modernisation of food processing industries.
3. Scheme for Research & Development in Food processing Industries.
4. Scheme for person power Development in Food Processing Industries.
5. Scheme for Generic Advertisement on processed Food and Marketing Assistance.
6. Scheme for Strengthening of Backward Linkages of Food Processing Industries.
7. Scheme for promotion of Food Processing Industries.

Q. NO. 224 ON FLOOD SITUATION IN ASSAM

ON 15.12.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, this year, the flood has devastated Assam very much. It was an unprecedented flood. Due to this flood, a lot of difficulties have arisen in Assam. Particularly, roads have been badly damaged there. In order to improve these roads and also to improve the communication system, the Assam Government have asked for Rs. 182.76 crores from the Central Government. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister knows about this; if the hon. Minister knows about this, then how much money has been sanctioned. And if the Minister has not sanctioned anything, what are the reasons for not sanctioning the amount? this is my simple question.

SHRI M.THAMBALAI DURAI: I can also answer him simply. Regarding the demand from the Assam Government for repair of the damaged roads, the total demand is Rs. 650 lakhs, and we have sanctioned Rs. 150 lakhs. We have sanctioned this for the 1998-99 period.

Whatever allotment we have got for the maintenance and development of roads, within that, we are sanctioning it based on the number of kilometres to be covered. If we get more money, then, we can definitely allocate more money for the Assam Government and we can see to it that the project is implemented quickly.

DISCUSSION ON RAILWAY SYSTEM IN NORTH EAST ON 2.6.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Sir, I want to submit one thing. Such type of things were happening in Assam previously also. This is not a new thing. Previously also some express trains, and even the Rajdhani Express, have been blasted and some accidents had occurred. So, these things are related to some other factors. This might have occurred due to some sabotage caused by some political or other elements there. But this thing has not been stated in the statement. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is happening

there. Who is really responsible for all this trouble? If such things keep on happening there, it will create a serious problem for Assam because this is the only link for Assam and the North-Eastern region. Such type of incidents will create a serious problem for the people of that area. I request the Railway Minister to take all the steps to find out the culprit and punish them. On the other hand, I think that certain militant organisations are doing this unless the militant organisations are tackled effectively and firmly, such type of incidents will keep happening in future also. So, they have to be tackled firmly.

Secondly, the Railway Minister should think of an alternative line. There is a demand for an alternative line. This is the only link which is sabotaged in one way or the other. There is a demand for an alternative route from Moynagiri to North Bengal through Dhubri and Goalpara.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI) : You can raise it during discussion on the Railway Budget.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Right, sir. But this incident should be taken very seriously. This is my submission. Thank you.

DISCUSSION ON AMMENDMENT TO GRATUITY ACT, 1972 ON 2.6.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Thank you, Madam, allowing me to make certain points on this amending Bill.

Considering the objective of the amendment to the payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, considering the old security benefit deserved by the employees on retirement from service, and considering that this amendment, if accepted by the House, would render a better relief to the employees in the present-day situation of escalation of prices, I welcome the amendment to the said Act by the Government.

First of all, I would like to know about the implementation of the law. This amendment which enhances the gratuity ceiling is beneficial. There is no doubt about it. But the question is: for whom would it be applicable? Would it

applicable to all? Would it be applicable to the employees of the private sector also?

The private sector employees are also wanting this type of gratuity. All employees, whether they are in the public sector or they are in the private sector, must get the benefit. I ask whether this will be applicable to all employees, private as well as public.

Then, thirdly, nowadays we know that there is a great violation of the gratuity laws. To prevent violation of the law and to implement it in a proper way there should be a proper authority. This authority to implement the gratuity law, should be formed like the provident Fund Authority. There should be some authority. That is very important. Without an authority, it is very difficult to prevent violation of the gratuity laws.

Fourthly, to implement the Gratuity Act, as amended, properly, there must be a fund, from which gratuity may be sanctioned to retiring employees. There must be a fund. This is very essential. Without a fund, no gratuity can be paid in time. To build the fund, the employers should contribute to it regularly in monthly instalments. This should be implemented. This is very important because it will be very difficult for the employees to get gratuity on retirement if there is no fund.

The management of this fund is very important. So, the management of this fund should be given to the Government. The Government should take it over. The authority to manage this fund must be vested in the Government. This authority must be responsible for the proper functioning of the fund. The authority must see to it that the employers' contribution is received regularly as per law.

This is my humble submission. Thank you.

DISCUSSION ON APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) BILL 1998 ON 13.7.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Thank you, Madam, Anyway, I will try to finish it quickly.

Today we have to approve the appropriation (Railways) No. 3 Bill, 1998. But before going to do that I have something

to say about our Railways. Our Railways have a very good network throughout the country. They are a good mode of transport both for passengers and commercial goods. They help the Indian economy by and large.

The Railways are always expanding in our country. They still have far more scope for expansion. The expansion is needed in some parts of the country, particularly, in the North-East region.

To run such a board and ever-expanding railways the highest efficiency is necessary. If we examine this point seriously, we will find that the efficiency is dwindling now-a-days. The hon. Railway Minister should take serious note of it.

I would like to cite a few examples. The timings of trains need to be followed strictly. We have seen that the authorities are very much callous. All the trains including the most prestigious trains like shatabdi Express and Rajdhani Express are running late. The Guwahati Rajdhani Express perhaps comes at the foremost position. Express, mail and long distance trains sometimes are very late.

These trains coming late by three to four hour is quite normal. Sometimes these trains are very late by 10 hours or 12 hours or even 24 hours. In certain cases some trains are late by 50 hours. I have my own experience. Once I visited Bombay. I came by the Dadar Express. It was late by 50 hours.

Will the Ministry look into it and see to it that all the trains run on time? If this callousness persists, those people who want to travel by rail, will have to find some other means of travelling. There is no doubt about it.

Secondly, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to the pitiable conditions faced by the second class passengers and ordinary passengers. These people buy tickets quite early so that their journey is comfortable. But to their utter surprise most of the passengers find that their seats have been intruded by some other persons causing them a lot of inconvenience. Those passengers whose names are in the waiting list, are the worst suffers. They are deprived of berths even though

they are lying vacant on the day of journey. Some other persons get those berths. Those passengers remain silent spectators. This is going on perhaps in every train. As my colleagues have mentioned, the basic amenities are also not good. Sometimes, there is no drinking water. Sometimes there is no light in your bogie. These are all common things. Sometimes, some military personnel also travel without reservation. They bring some big trunks. These trunks are kept in corridors or in toilets. It causes a lot of difficulties to passengers. This is the position.

So far as the North-Eastern region is concerned, I would say that the Railway Budget is like an old wine in a new bottle. There is nothing new for the North-East. Whatever has been mentioned in this Budget, was announced by the previous Government. There is no mention of a bridge over the Brahmaputra at Dibrugarh. There is no mention about conversion of metre-gauge line to broad-gauge line from Lumding to Silchar. The train which goes to Lakhimpur and Dhemaji is very much irregular. All the trains from Guwahati to Dibrugarh are yet to be introduced.

The Railway Ministry has to act very seriously. I would like to request the Railway Minister to help Assam and North-East by expanding railways very quickly in these areas. Thank you.

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO
THE HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA
ON CURRENT FLOOD DEVASTATION IN ASSAM.
Dear Hon'ble Prime Minister,
NEW DELHI

Assam is badly affected by flood caused by the Brahmaputra and its tributaries in the current year.

About 15 lakhs of people are affected and most of them have to take shelter in safer places. Their properties and living houses are hit by the flood. Roads and communications are also badly affected. Several lakhs hectares of crop land are submerged under water causing loss of crops worth crores

of rupees. Cattles are also affected. Almost all the districts of Assam are badly affected.

So the State of Assam needs urgent help from the central government.

Assam State Council of CPI request you to help the state of Assam by sanctioning Rs. 500.00 crores from the natural calamity fund of the Government of India for rehabilitation and restoration.

Secondly, the council requests you to send a high powered central team to the state for the assessment of the situation immediately and recommendation.

With regards,

Your Sincerely

Drupad Borgohain

Secretary, Assam State
Council, CPI

DISCUSSION ON LOTTERY BILL

Dated: 7.7.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I will not take much time. Everybody says that lottery is a social evil and that it is a kind of gamble. I also believe it and for that reason I do not support this Bill. Instead of this Bill, at least, our Home Minister should bring a comprehensive Bill for a total ban on the lottery. In this Bill, it is proposed that one digit lottery should be banned, but still three digit lottery is there. A lottery is a lottery, whether it is one digit or three digit one. So, we want that a comprehensive legislation - which is very much essential for having a total ban on the lottery - should be there.

Secondly, this lottery business brings ruin to family after family. Some suicidal cases were also reported. That is the position. It brings crores of rupees to some mafias and to certain fellows, but it harms lakhs and lakhs of people. That is the position. Somebody argued that it generates some employment. What type of employment does it generate? What good is this type of employment? Is it good? It is no

good employment. So we should ban the lottery.

Then there is another argument and that is about revenue. It was argued by somebody that revenue has been brought to the states with the help of lotteries. I think this type of bringing revenue to the State is not good. Most of the States have certain natural resources. If our Central Government helps to utilise these natural resources, that is, if they give some money to utilise the natural resources, then the State Governments can set up industries and develop other work. Then, perhaps more revenue could be brought. So, it would have been better for the Central Government to do such type of thing instead of doing this business. I request our Home Minister to bring a comprehensive Bill to have a total ban on this. That is my point.

SPEECH ON SPECIAL MOTION ON NEED FOR CENTRAL ASSISTANCE TO FLOOD-AFFECTED STATE OF ASSAM

Date: 13.7.1998

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it will be very difficult for me to place all the facts of flood-affected State of Assam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have to take up other Special Mentions also. We have to finish by 1 o' Clock.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am raising a serious issue of floods in Assam. The people of Assam are languishing under floods. They are reeling under floods. Under such conditions, how can I place all the facts in two minutes?

This year also Assam has been seriously affected by floods. Actually crops worth crores of rupees have been destroyed. This time also lakhs of people have been affected by the fury of floods. These floods have hit the State not only this year but year after year. Every year Assam is hit by floods because of the monsoon rainfall in this Region. These floods have created hardship not only to the people of Assam, but to the people of the entire North East Region like Arunachal

Pradesh. There are certain rivers which have caused inundation in the low-lying areas. They are reeling under floods. In view of this serious situation, the Government of India should come to the rescue of the State of Assam. The Government of Assam requires Rs. 500 crores to tackle the situation. The Government of India should release this money immediately to tackle the situation. The Central Government should depute a high-powered team to the State of Assam to assess the actual damage and the difficulties being faced by the people there. If the Central Government deposes a team and if they assess the situation properly and necessary financial help is given to the people of Assam, then, only the people of Assam can be rescued from these natural calamities.

The Brahmaputra Board was created by an Act of Parliament in 1981. Though this Board is there, so far it has not harnessed the waters of the Brahmaputra river properly so that floods can be controlled permanently. There is a couplet in Assamese "Aache Garu, Nabay hail, Huatko Nahuwai bhal" This means there are bullocks. But they have not been used for ploughing. What is the necessity of such bullocks? The Brahmaputra Board is like that. That Brahmaputra Board has not found a permanent solution to control the floods. So, year after year, the people of Assam are reeling under floods.

So, I urge upon the Central Government to depute a high-powered team to the State of Assam to assess the damage caused by this natural calamity and immediate financial assistance be given to mitigate the sufferings of the people. I hope the Government will accede to my request.

DISCUSSION ON ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS OF THE COUNTRY

Date: 22.7.98

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN : MISS SAROJ KHAPRDE. M

Borgohain, your party has only eight minutes. Please keep that in mind.

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Madam Vice-Chairman, thank you for giving me time to say a few words on this very important subject.

As we all know, this is not a problem peculiar to our country alone. This problem is confronting the whole world today.

Madam, as per the national standard, thirty three per cent of the total land area should be under forest cover. But, according to the statistics, we find that, excepting a few States, the States in the North-Eastern Region, in the other States of our country, the forest cover is far below the national standard. As far as the North Eastern Region is concerned, excepting Assam, in the other States, the forest cover is more than thirty-three per cent. In the case of Assam, it is less than thirty-three per cent: it is only thirty per cent. In certain States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the two big states, the forest cover is very very less.

We see that only 1.5 to 2 percent of the land is covered with forests in Delhi. So, the environmental position in the country is very much serious.

I want to know how the Ministry of Environment and Forests will react to this position. When the pollution and the environmental position in Delhi were very much serious, the Supreme Court had to take some decision. I want to know from the Ministry what it has done on the Supreme Court verdict. The Government should take this alarming situation very seriously, and it should use all its resources to bring 33 percent of the area under forests according to the norm. If the Government is unable to do that, perhaps, the pollution situation and the ecological situation cannot improve.

I want to speak about the North-Eastern region, particularly about Assam. As you all know, the highest rainfall in the world is reported in this region. Mawsynram, a village of Meghalaya records the highest rainfall every year. It is due to the south-west monsoon and also due to the heavy forests of this region that there is the highest rainfall in the region.

The water resources are very much important. The water resources can be utilised for development of industries and for generation of power. Water is very much useful. It is highly necessary for agriculture. The climate and the ecology are controlled by rainfall also. These help human habitation in this region.

But, some wrong actions have been in regard to the forests in this region. There has been senseless felling of trees. The senseless felling of trees and senseless cutting of hills has lead to some bad effects on the ecology of this region. It has brought bad effects on the rainfall also. Because of the wrong actions, the rainfall is going to be erratic in this region. The rainfall normally comes to this region in the month of april. It continues up to mid-October. But, due to the deforestation, some parts of this region have a heavy rainfall, while there is drought also in some other parts. You know that there are floods in Assam, which create havoc. But, at the same time, there is drought also in some parts of this region. This erratic behaviour is due to the wrongful activity against the forest in this part.

So, I ask of the Ministry of Environment and Forests to take this phenomenon very seriously and create the correct ecological position there.

Deforestation should be avoided. It should be rather banned. On the other hand Bramhaputra should be harnessed so that we can get good results.

Due to unplanned industrial development, industries also bring in some pollution causing loss to crops, cattle and affecting human lives. The rivers in which the industrial wastage is thrown get polluted. When water of such rivers is used, it affects the people very badly causing various types of diseases.

Open-cast mining also brings in some bad environmental effect. They cause several types of natural effects. Even fish are destroyed. Such a position has been reported from the Brahmaputra at Guwahati, the major city of the region.

In upper Assam, ONGC units and Oil-fields are also creating pollution. They are affecting crops, particularly the paddy fields.

To avoid such pollution all sorts of precautions should be taken by the Government. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to take a serious note to the points I have made and take necessary action.

LETTER FROM SMT. MANEKA GANDHI TO DRUPAD BORGOHAIN

Date: August 13, 1998

Dear Shri Borgohain,

Please refer to your letter dated May 16, 1998 regarding grand-in-aid to Dr. Ambedkar Mission, Dhoptari, Changsari, District Kamrup, Assam (Registered on 31.10.1997) for hostel, school, Computer centre and mobile dispensary for Scheduled Castes.

According to existing procedure we were considering only those NGOs which have been working at least for two years. Now we are proposing certain changes in the scheme and as soon as modifications are finalised, your case will be considered.

With regards,

Your Sincerely

(SMT MANEKA GANDHI)

MEMORANDUM ON SANCTIONING THREE TOURIST LODGES IN SIBSAGAR DISTRICT

Date : December 4, 1998.

Mr. Omak Apang,
Minister of State, Tourism,
Govt. of India.

I had raised a question in the budget session of parliament the establishment of tourist lodges in Joysagar, Gargaon, and Cheraideo where the capitals of Ahom Kingdom were located during the six hundred years of its tenure from 1228 AD to 1926 AD. You had replied that no such venture had been taken by your ministry.

Now I request you to consider it seriously and take pain to decide the establishment of three tourist lodges in these places which attracts tourists from different regions of our own country as well as from foreign countries. People are interested to visit the places for the monuments and places of the Ahom kings, and also for the "Dauls" where the 'Pujas' are offered

Every effort has been taken by the tourist department, archaeological department, Sibsagar District administration and the local public to preserve these monuments and to beautify the areas.

Assam Ministers as well as M.Ps from the region are investing money from their local area development funds in the said programme.

But the areas are still short of good accommodation for the tourists. So, I fervently request you to apply your mind to prepare a project on behalf of your ministry to build three lodges in Jaysagar, Gargaon and Cheraideo and implement it as early as possible.

Hope, you will react favourable to our just request.

Your Sincerely

DRUPAD BORGOHAIN

SPEECH ON OILFIELD BILL

Date : 8.12.98

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Thank you, Madam, for giving me time to raise a few points on these Amendments. Let me first express my disapproval to the promulgation of Ordinances. This has become a habit of the Government to promulgate Ordinances. The Government should not amend Acts in a hurry, as is done in this case. If the Government takes this position, then, perhaps, it will be very difficult. This Bill could have been taken up in the normal manner. Had it been taken up in the normal manner, it would have been better.

Let me come to the Amendments as passed in the Lok Sabha. I have seen, I have observed that only a few Amendments have been adopted in the Lok Sabha. The first one is, sub-section (4)(b) of Section 6A of the Original Act has been removed. That is one Amendment. Sub-section (4)(b) of Section 6A of the Original Act gives power to the Central Government to enhance the royalty in respect of any mineral

oil once in a period of three years. That is now being removed. If it is removed, then, it will create certain difficulties for the oil-producing States. Every oil-producing State of India has a right to have royalty being enhanced by the Central Government. The original Act gives an opportunity to the States to demand enhancement of royalty once in every three years. The States have a chance to calculate their share of royalty, for three years, which enables them to plan the development work.

Since it is sought to be removed, the States may have difficulty. This may further aggravate the Centre-State relations in certain cases. So, I think this type of an amendment will not help and the Government should rethink about this point.

Secondly, the amendment of sub-section (5) of the original Act brings in the provision of exempting generally and absolutely the whole or any part of the leviable royalty in respect of offshore exploration areas. To my mind, it is detrimental to the national interest. I have an apprehension that the Government wants to invite multinational corporations, transnational companies and other private companies to explore the oil fields. This amendment or exempting royalty, wholly or partly, was sought for the purpose of giving an incentive to the private companies. Will it not go against the national interest? Moreover, the States have the right to share the levy on offshore exploration. This exemption may deprive the State Governments of their legitimate share of royalty. So, I have an apprehension that the amendments will go against the interest of the oil-producing states like Assam, Nagaland, Gujarat, Maharashtra and others. A State like Assam depends on the royalties to a great extent. So, the amendments may create difficulties for such type of States. Therefore, I request the Government to withdraw the amendments at this hour itself. This is my humble submission. Thank you.

LETTER TO UNION MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT

December 16, 1998

Shri M. Thambai Durai

Union Minister of Surface Transport

Transport Bhawan

New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Kindly recall our interaction during Question Hour on 15th December, 1998 on the Starred question No. 224 regarding damage caused to roads/bridges in Assam due to floods. We expressed our disagreement on the data supplied by your Ministry on the total damage and total length of National Highway repaired during the last three years. We would therefore request your personal attention to find out the actual facts and to deal severely those furnishing incorrect information to present before Parliament. The following points may please be verified;

1. More than 100KM of NH-52 is still single lane; the road was not improved for the last 15 years. It has lost the ability to withstand the force of floodwater.
2. The fact that you narrated the non availability of Bitumen itself is indicative of incomplete repair of NH-52 and 37 in the recent past.
3. There was no bridge connectivity through River Gai in the last three years; few businessmen did the present arrangement of bamboo approach recently.
4. NE has not been included in any of the national road development network either 4 laning Express highways or covering the entire NE in the National Corridor Network. The fact remains, when a Government machinery does not include some portion of NE in the National Corridor Networking, it would provide an additional handle to the insurgent groups to consolidate in those areas.
5. The present reimbursement system could not materialise any significant development of the road network in Assam and if this procedure is continued there is no hope for future

development. The Assam Government, due to the several resource constraints, could not utilize the earmarked money to get reimbursed during last couple of years. It is the common people, who suffers most.

6. The Government of Assam in its memorandum dated 24th September, 1998 requested Government of India to release 182.76 crores for repairing of roads and bridges including National Highways damaged by unprecedented flood this year. Your reply it indicated release of 1.5 crore only, which is nothing but a mockery in the name of providing Central relief for the repairing work. It is quite negligible amount for a state which was badly devastated.

It is therefore requested that-

- a) The entire issue of damage and repair of NH in Assam be verified expeditiously.
- b) Immediate repair and improvement work be ensured with necessary allocation of fund.
- c) Suitable methods for direct funding of NH be evolved so that the earmarked money is utilized in time.
- d) Entire North East be included in the proposed East West national corridor i.e, this road should go to extreme East. For this purpose, continuation of Nri-37 with Stillwell road to link Myanmar through eastern border at Sadia may also be explored.

In view of the same, we would request you to kindly take necessary action so that road connectivity is restored without further delay. With regards,

Your Sincerely

DRUPAD BORGOHAIN, MP

PRAKANTA WARISA, MP

DR. ARUN SARMA, MP

15.12.98

SUPPLIMENTARY QUESTION ON Q. NO. 224

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Sir, this year, the flood has devastated Assam very much. It was an unprecedented flood. Due to this flood, A lot of difficulties have arisen in Assam, particularly, roads have been badly damaged there. In order to improve these roads and also to improve the communication system, the Assam Government have asked for Rs. 182.76 crores from the Central Government. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister knows about this; if the hon. Minister knows about this then how much money has been sanctioned. And if the Minister has not sanctioned anything, what are the reasons for not sanctioning the amount? This is my simple question.

SHRI THAMBAI DURAI: I can also answer him simply. Regarding the demand from the Assam Government for repair of the damaged roads, the total demand is Rs. 650 lakhs, and we have sanctioned Rs 150 lakhs. We have sanctioned this for the 1998-99 period.

Whatever allotment we have got for the maintenance and development of roads, within that, we are sanctioning it based on the number of kilometres to be covered. If we get more money, then, we can definitely allocate more money for the Assam Government and we can see to it that the project is implemented quickly.

DISCUSSION ON THE INDIAN MAJORITY BILL

Date: 21.12.98

SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Indian Majority (Amendment) Bill was brought before this House last year also. Now, we are going to discuss and pass it. There is some discrimination about the Indian majority. The original Act was enacted in 1875 during the British period. In fact, it ought to have been amended long time ago. Anyway, though it could not be brought forth earlier, now it has been

brought. So, I support it very much. There is a discrimination about the majority in the original Act. That discrimination should not be there because every person attains the majority at the age of 18. So, this discrimination should be removed. Since this Bill aims at removing this discrimination, I support the Bill fully. Thank you.
